

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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**Readout of the President's Call with President Hollande of France**

The President spoke today with President Hollande of France to consult about the situation in eastern Ukraine. The leaders agreed that their preference remains a bilateral ceasefire, fully supported by Russia, and a peaceful resolution to the conflict, including the release of all hostages. In the absence of any meaningful efforts by the separatists to engage in talks or to adhere to the ceasefire, however, the President noted that we respect the Ukrainian government's responsibility to maintain public order in the country and to protect the population. The leaders further agreed that Russia has a responsibility to cease its destabilizing activities, such as by no longer allowing and facilitating the transit of weapons and fighters across the border, ceasing its own military build-up near the border, and halting its ongoing direct and indirect support for violent separatists. The Presidents decided that the United States and Europe should take further coordinated measures to impose costs on Russia if it does not take immediate steps toward de-escalation.

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